

Keeping Your Cell-phone Private

Did you know that AARP helped lead the fight for my cell-phone privacy bill that the Legislature passed this year? AARP Advocacy Director Lauren Moughon testified that 90% of cell-phone users believe cell-phone numbers should be listed in a phone directory *only* when the customer requests it. Without this privacy protection, she added,



“seniors would be even more vulnerable to phone scammers than they are now.”

With the help of AARP and Consumers' Union, my proposal to protect cell-phone privacy became law. Wireless companies are now legally prohibited from putting any Washington resident's private

cell-phone number in a public phone directory without first getting the customer's written permission. Thank you, AARP, for helping to make this victory possible!

Free Help for Pierce County Seniors

Pierce County has a *great* one-stop phone number to help local senior citizens find information and services they need. This is one number every Pierce County senior should keep handy!

PIERCE COUNTY SENIOR INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

Toll-free: 1-800-562-0332 or (253) 798-4600

Service Hours: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Free Guide to Senior Services!

Senior Media Services has created a wonderful “Where to Turn” guide to senior services in Pierce County. Please stop by my Puyallup office to get a free copy of this valuable resource.

Announcement for Military Families

I'm happy to be the new co-chair of the Joint Committee on Veterans' and Military Affairs. As a member of a military family, I know our state should do more to honor our debt to veterans, active duty personnel and their families. Please let me know *your* ideas for recognizing our debt to the men and women whose sacrifices keep us safe and free. I'll make sure that Legislators hear your ideas.



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News for Seniors

State Representative
Dawn Morrell

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*Important Town
Hall and Medicare
meeting notices
inside!*



State Representative
Dawn Morrell
25th District

News for Seniors!

Dear Friends,

I'm writing to share important legislative news for Pierce County senior citizens, and to invite you to a special Senior Town Hall meeting in Puyallup on October 22nd. Please take a look inside to learn about new laws and priority issues for seniors. You'll also see a brief survey that asks for your help on future long-term care policies in our state.

I hope you can attend my Senior Town Hall. If not, please remember you can always reach me with your suggestions through the contact information on this page. And, as always, I'd enjoy visiting with you at my downtown Puyallup office. Just call and make an appointment so we can get together at a time that works for you.

I'd just like to add that November 2005 is National Family Caregivers Month. I've worked hard to support the work of family caregivers, because their hard work brings care and dignity to thousands of deserving seniors and disabled retirees. I hope you'll find a moment in November to honor the caregivers who deserve our thanks and respect *every* day.

Warmly,

Dawn Morrell

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1-800-635-9993

Committees:

- Vice-Chair, Health Care;
- Co-Chair, Joint Committee on Veterans' and Military Affairs;
- Capital Budget;
- Economic Development, Agriculture & Trade;
- Rules;
- Long-term Care Task Force

AFFORDABLE PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

I was saddened by a recent AARP survey that found 24% of prescription-drug users in our state are skipping doses or cutting pills in half to make medicines last longer, and 6% have cut back on food, fuel or electricity to pay prescription costs. As a nurse, I know these choices endanger people's health. As an American, I know people shouldn't have to make these choices in the greatest nation on earth. We must do better, and new state and federal laws will help.



Prescription Drug Buyers' Consortium

Work has already begun on the Prescription Drug Buyers' Consortium the Legislature created this year. This will allow many businesses and citizens to get the same savings the state gets from bulk-purchases of medicines. An estimated 200,000 Washington residents are expected to take advantage of the Buyers' Consortium. I'll send out further information when the savings program is launched early next year.

Prescription Medicines from Canada

Gaining access to affordable Canadian medicines is a top priority for AARP and the Senior Lobby, and for me personally. We passed laws this year that will seek federal approval to allow Washington residents to buy medicines

from licensed Canadian mail-order pharmacies, and to allow local pharmacists to buy medicines from Canadian wholesalers.

Federal approval for these improvements is far from certain. However, a number of Democrats and Republicans in Congress are working together to give states more flexibility to import low-cost medicines. This bipartisan cooperation is encouraging. No one, especially seniors, can afford more partisan bickering in Congress on this important issue.

Deciding On Your Prescription Drugs



This fall every Medicare-eligible beneficiary will have to make a crucial choice about a new Medicare prescription drug benefit. **Your choice may save hundreds of dollars or waste considerable money.** Don't paint yourself into an expensive corner!

Learn what's best for you at the "MEDICARE Rx INFO DAY" that will be held at the Tacoma Elks Club, 1965 S. Union, from 9:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. on Monday, October 24, 2005. Come and leave when you want. Helpful workshops will be offered throughout the day. **Flu shots and many free services will also be available.** It's worth your while. Caregivers, adult children, relatives and friends are welcome. Call (253) 798-4600 for more information.

LONG TERM CARE

❖ Important Long-term Care Survey ❖

Our state will gain hundreds of thousands of senior citizens in the coming decades – including 94,000 more octogenarians! This is good news, but our fast-growing senior population also creates major long-term care challenges. That's why I sponsored, and the Legislature created, the new Long Term Care Task Force to plan *now* for future needs.

As a member of the Long Term Care Task Force, I'd like your help. *Please* take a moment to answer the following questions and send your answers back to me.

1. What steps, if any, have you taken to plan for your family's long-term care needs?
2. What do you think the state's role should be in long-term care?
3. Do you have any suggestions you would like to make to the Long-term Care Task Force?

Please put your replies in an envelope, add a stamp, and mail it to my Puyallup office. E-mail responses are fine, too. And please include a phone number or address so I can contact you. All information will be kept confidential. Thank you!



We did it! Personal Needs Allowance Up

Seniors asked me to help nursing home residents whose care is paid for by the state. Their tiny "personal needs allowance" hadn't been adjusted for inflation in 17 years! Many of these seniors have outlived all their family, and with no loved ones to turn to their \$41.62 allowance is all they have to pay for phone service, haircuts, stamps, shoes, clothes – everything.

I was proud to champion their request in the Legislature, and even prouder when lawmakers agreed to increase the personal needs allowance by \$10 a month. This small improvement will make a big difference in the lives of people who deserve our support.

Special TOWN HALL MEETING for Seniors!

Please join me for an important Senior Town Hall Meeting. We'll discuss new laws important to seniors and hear your ideas about laws I should support in 2006.

Special guest Lauren Moughon, AARP Washington's Advocacy Director, will join us to discuss prescription drug issues facing seniors.

When: Saturday, October 22, 2005, from 1:00 to 3:00 PM.

Where: Puyallup Library
324 South Meridian, in downtown Puyallup.

NEW LAWS TO HELP SENIORS

Fairness for Mobile Home Residents

Imagine being a disabled senior citizen in a mobile home park and having a landlord who simply refuses to do needed repairs. Or imagine your landlord suddenly announcing a new rule that prohibits visits from grandchildren. These are just a few of the actual complaints I've heard. I've heard many other complaints about unreasonable rent increases or unfair lease violations in mobile home and manufactured housing communities.

Earlier this year, I wrote a new state law to strengthen the Office of Manufactured Housing Ombudsman's ability to investigate and resolve landlord-tenant disputes. The law also calls for the 2006 Legislature to consider further strategies to improve how complaints are handled. If you or someone you know has been unable to solve a serious landlord-tenant dispute in a manufactured or mobile home community, I urge you to call the toll-free Ombudsman Hotline at 1-800-964-0852.



State
Representative **Dawn Morrell**

News for Seniors